

Message Text

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SUBJECT: EDITORIAL IN THE IRISH TIMES, JULY 17,1978

FOLLOWING EDITORIAL APPEARED IN THE IRISH TIMES, JULY 17,
1978 UNDER THE HEADING "AT THE WALL".

PRESIDENT CARTER HAS DONE A KENNEDY IN BERLIN, AS MANY
REPORTERS HAVE OBSERVED. ONE OF THE SEQUENCES THAT IS
ALWAYS INCLUDED IN FILM REVIEWS OF THE KENNEDY DAYS IS
THAT OF THE YOUNG PRESIDENT PROCLAIMING: "ICH BIN EIN
BERLINER." HE WAS NOT SPEAKING LITERALLY, OF COURSE,
MERELY ASSOCIATED HIS SENTIMENTS WITH THOSE OF THE
CITIZENS OF THE BELEAGURED CITY.

HE WAS EQUALLY CHARMING ABOUT HIS IRISH ORIGINS WHEN HE
VISITED THIS ISLAND; BUT HE WAS AN AMERICAN THROUGH
AND THROUGH; NOTHING THAT WAS PARTICULARLY TO IRELAND'S
ADVANTAGE HAPPENED DURING HIS PRESIDENCY. THE BERLINERS
NEEDED REINFORCEMENT MORE THAN DID THE IRISH.

FIFTEEN YEARS AFTER, THE BERLINERS STILL LIVE UNDER A
QUADRIPARTITE AGREEMENT ON AN ISLAND IN THE MIDDLE OF
THE SOVIET ZONE OF GERMANY. THEY ARE A PARTICULARLY
TOUGH ELEMENT IN GERMAN LIFE; PERHAPS BECAUSE OF THE
SLAVIC INFLUENCE IN BLOOD AND BEHAVIOUR; PERHAPS
BECAUSE OF THE TOUGH TIMES THEY HAVE SEEN; AND THERE IS
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CERTAINLY NEED FOR TOUGHNESS TODAY.

CARTER, IN DOING HIS RATHER CRASS, IMITATIVE BIT IN
GERMAN- "WAS IMMER SEI, BERLIN BLEIBT FREI: NO MATTER
WHAT HAPPENS BERLIN WILL STAY FREE" IS KEEPING UP THE
FRONT OF RECENT DAYS WITH ITS SALT TALKS, ITS SHARP
REACTION TO THE MOSCOW TRIALS AND-REVEALINGLY-ITS SEQUEL

OF OFFERS OF BODY SWAPPING.

IT IS DIFFICULT FOR BIG POWERS TO KEEP UP RIGHTEOUS
INDIGNATION AT THE CRIMES OF OTHERS WHEN THEY SHOW
INDECENT HASTE TO RECOVER THEIR OWN AGENTS OR FRIENDS
IN RETURN FOR THE HANDING OVER OF SOME OF THEIR OWN
HUMAN BOOTY. BUT BEING TOUGH IS CARTER'S PRESENT LINE
AND HE WENT FARTHER; HE TOLD HIS AUDIENCE EMPHATICALLY
AND WITHOUT ANY EQUIVOCATION THAT ANY ATTACK ON WEST
GERMANY WOULD BE SEEN AS AN ATTACK ON THE SOIL OF THE
UNITED STATES.

NOR DID HE DODGE THE QUESTION OF THE PARTITION OF GERMANY,
THOUGH DIPLOMATICALLY LEAVING IT SOMEWHAT IN GOD'S HANDS
WHEN HE SAID: "WE PRAY FOR THE UNIFICATION OF
GERMANY AS AN EXPRESSION OF WILL BY THE PEOPLE OF YOUR
GREAT NATION." (THIS WAS, APPARENTLY, AN IMPROMPTU
INTERPOLATION. IT WAS NOT IN HIS PREPARED TEXT, BUT
SOME TIMES THE INTERPOLATIONS ARE EVEN MORE CAREFULLY
PREPARED THAN THE TEXT WHICH IS ISSUED).

BUT, WITHOUT SOME SORTING OUT OF THE FINANCIAL
PROBLEMS OF THE SEVEN INDUSTRIALISED NATIONS NOW MEETING
IN BONN, THERE COULD BE LESS BACKBONE TO PRESIDENT
CARTER'S DETERMINATION AND TOUGHNESS. THE BONN
MEETING IS CERTAINLY ONE OF THE GREAT TURNING POINTS OF
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THIS AGE, AND PRESIDENT CARTER'S BERLIN PERFORMANCE A
PRELIMINARY FLOURISH. KRENE

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